

June 12 / Administration of William J. Clinton, 2000

And I would like to invite all of you to join us in the State Dining Room for a reception in honor of our guests and all the students and everyone else who is here. Let's go in there, and you can continue your questions. Thank you very much.

NOTE: The White House Millennium Matinee, entitled "Exploration: Under the Sea, Beyond the

Stars," the ninth in a series of Millennium programs, began at 2:37 p.m. in the East Room at the White House. The transcript released by the Office of the Press Secretary also included the remarks of the First Lady, Dr. Tyson, Dr. McNutt, Ms. Lovell, and the participants in the question-and-answer portion of the program. The program was cybercast on the Internet.

Memorandum on a New Era of Ocean Exploration

June 12, 2000

Memorandum for the Secretary of Commerce

Subject: A New Era of Ocean Exploration

Two years ago, the Vice President and I joined you, other members of my Cabinet, and hundreds of others from across the country at the National Ocean Conference in Monterey. This historic gathering drew together for the first time representatives from government, industry, and the scientific and conservation communities to begin charting a common oceans agenda for the 21st century.

At the Conference, I directed my Cabinet to report back with recommendations for a coordinated, disciplined, long-term Federal ocean policy. In its report to me last year, *Turning to the Sea: America's Ocean Future*, the Cabinet outlined an ambitious and detailed strategy to ensure the protection and sustainable use of our ocean resources. I am proud of the actions my Administration is taking to begin implementing this strategy, including the Executive Order I issued last month to strengthen our national network of marine protected areas.

One of the Cabinet's key recommendations was that the Federal Government establish a national strategy to expand exploration of the oceans. Although we have learned more about our oceans in the past 25 years than during any other period in history, over 95 percent of the underwater world is still unknown and unseen. What remains to be explored may hold clues to the origins of life on Earth, cures for human diseases, answers to how to achieve sustainable use of our oceans, links to our maritime history, and information to protect the endangered species of the sea.

Today, I am announcing steps to immediately enhance our ocean exploration efforts and to develop the long-term exploration strategy recommended by you and the rest of the Cabinet. Together, these actions represent the start of a new era of ocean exploration.

First, I am announcing the launch of three new expeditions off the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts. As you know, these expeditions, led by the Department of Commerce in collaboration with private partners, will allow the first detailed exploration of the Hudson River Canyon off New York, the Middle Grounds and Big Bend areas off central Florida, and the Davidson Seamount off central California. Researchers will employ the latest submersible technologies and will share their discoveries with schoolchildren and the public via the Internet and satellite communications.

Second, to ensure that these new expeditions are only the start of a new era of ocean exploration, I am directing you to convene a panel of leading ocean explorers, educators, and scientists and to report back to me within 120 days with recommendations for a national oceans exploration strategy. In implementing this directive, you shall consult with the National Science Foundation, the National Atmospheric and Space Administration, the Department of the Interior, the Environmental Protection Agency, and other agencies, as appropriate. The strategy should consider the full array of benefits that our oceans provide, and should support our efforts to conserve and ensure the sustainable use of valuable ocean resources. Specifically, the strategy should:

1. Define objectives and priorities to guide ocean exploration, including the identification of key sites of scientific, historic, and cultural importance;
2. Recommend ways of creating new partnerships to draw on the tools and talents of educational, research, private-sector, and government organizations, including opportunities for Federal agencies to provide in-kind support for private ocean exploration initiatives;
3. Examine the potential for new technologies—including manned and unmanned vehicles and undersea platforms—to observe and explore the oceans from surface to seafloor and recommend ways to explore the oceans remotely using new observatories and sensors and other innovative uses of technology; and
4. Recommend mechanisms to ensure that information about newly explored areas warranting additional protection is referred

to the newly established Marine Protected Area Center, and that newly discovered organisms or other resources with medicinal or commercial potential are identified for possible research and development.

In the early years of the 19th century, President Thomas Jefferson commissioned Captain Meriwether Lewis to explore the American West. What followed was the most important exploration in this country's history. As America prepares to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the Lewis and Clark Expedition, we have an opportunity to set our sights on a much broader horizon. The time has come to take exploration farther west, and east, and south, to our submerged continents. In so doing, we can challenge and rekindle American's spirit of exploration, open up a whole new underwater world of possibilities, and help preserve our extraordinary marine heritage for future generations.

WILLIAM J. CLINTON

Statement on the Death of Frank Patterson

June 12, 2000

Hillary and I were saddened to learn of the death of one of Ireland's greatest ambassadors of music, Frank Patterson. A world-class tenor, Frank brought the joy of classical and popular music as well as Irish culture into the hearts

of millions around the world. Hillary and I will never forget hearing him perform at the White House. On behalf of the American people, we offer our sympathies to his family and friends and to the people of Ireland.

Statement on the German Negotiations To Compensate Victims of Nazi Slave and Forced Labor

June 12, 2000

I am very pleased that a major hurdle to agreement on the historic German initiative dealing with wrongs arising from World War II has now been overcome. I am pleased to announce that there is now agreement on the mechanism for providing enduring and all-encompassing legal peace for German companies. This is an important day for those victims of Nazi-era wrongs who have waited 50 years for justice. It is also an important day for Chancellor Schroeder and German companies. They have

shown remarkable leadership in trying to rectify the wrongs committed during the Nazi era.

I hope the German Parliament, whose leaders have been involved in these negotiations, will be able to complete their work on legislation expeditiously so that payments to the victims can begin this year.

German-American relations are based on our common commitment to human dignity coming from a shared history of democracy for over